

## **Memorandum**

**To:** Planning Commission

**From:** Kimberly Dietz, Senior Planner, 425-556-2415  
Sarah Stiteler, AICP, Senior Planner, 425-556-2469

**Date:** June 24, 2015

**Subject:** **Old Town Historic Core Overlay and Zoning Code Amendment**

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### **MEETING PURPOSE**

The purpose of this study session is to: 1) prepare for the Commission's review and discussion regarding the Old Town Historic Core Plan amendments, and 2) seek the Planning Commission's input regarding the proposed schedule and approach for review of proposed updates to the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code as part of the Old Town Historic Core Plan.

### **BACKGROUND**

Planning staff began the Old Town Historic Core planning process in January 2014. The purpose is to develop a plan for the historic central core of the City's first business district with the significant participation of property and business owners and community stakeholders (see Attachment A for location). The Historic Core Plan will be an overarching plan that defines the Core and provides context for the deliverables below. Preparation of these will be phased, with proposed updates to the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code as the first deliverables or Phase I.

- Amendments to the Comprehensive Plan – recognizing Historic Core and updating associated policies
- Amendments to Redmond Zoning Code, particularly:
  - Updates to design standards for development in the Historic Core; and
  - Updates to the Downtown Pedestrian System map, including for Gilman Street

Phase II will consist of the following and will be addressed through subsequent amendments during 2016.

- Amendments to wayfinding and place making standards;
- Historic Core Brand, Marketing, and Event Plan;
- Coordination with, supplements to, and amendments to related plans such as the Strategic Art Plan and Pedestrian/Bicycle Plan; and

- Developer, investor, and proprietor guides regarding property, programs, and grant opportunities specific to the Historic Core.

Development of the recommended policy and code amendments for Phase I has been informed by:

- The Redmond Design Standards Evaluation Report developed by Makers consulting firm,
- Council's recommended Principles for Updates to Design Standards,
- Review of the built environment in the Historic Core,
- Review of code and implementation examples from other communities,
- Consultation via a series of study sessions with the Design Review Board and representatives from the Planning Commission and Landmark Commission regarding the City's policy guidance, existing design standards and concepts for updates,
- Continued outreach with property and business owners and other stakeholders, and
- Periodic consultations with City boards and commissions including the Planning Commission, Landmark Commission, Pedestrian & Bicycle Advisory Committee, and the Arts & Culture Commission

#### **INITIAL CONSULTATION WITH THE PLANNING COMMISSION AND THE DESIGN REVIEW BOARD**

In February and April 2015, staff met with the Planning Commission to introduce the Historic Core Plan and have initial discussions regarding approach for the review of proposed design standards amendments. The Planning Commission identified framework criteria for evaluation of proposed amendments, including, 1) how the proposal addresses the 10 Design Standards Principles identified by Makers; 2) integration of the proposed Historic Core design standards with those for Downtown overall; 3) the extent to which the proposed standards encourage all aspects of mobility in the Historic Core and all areas of Downtown; and, 4) how the proposed design standards balance community interests with those of business and property owners.

Review of draft code concepts with the Design Review Board over several meetings in April and May 2015 included discussion on what and how specific design elements and code updates should be addressed in the Old Town Historic Core overlay to guide future development to:

- Implement the vision for this area as set out in the Comprehensive Plan,
- Be complementary and sympathetic to historic and landmark structures located within the overlay,
- Foster visual interest and distinctive, high quality and timeless architecture and design, and
- Support a comfortable, consistent and engaging pedestrian experience along the street front.

The discussion and recommendations from these meetings regarding various design and building elements has been integrated within the Technical Committee Report that the Planning Commission will receive on June 26, 2015.

**PROPOSED APPROACH AND SCHEDULE**

Following the initial meeting with the Planning Commission on June 24, 2015 to discuss approach, an overview of the amendments will begin at the **July 8, 2015** meeting. At that time, staff will provide information and seek the Planning Commission's input regarding design elements that include tripartite architecture (base, middle and top/cap of a structure) and building materials. Additional meeting topics in July and August are as follows:

- **July 15** – Pedestrian System Map amendments and other streetscape elements
- **July 22** – building entries and corners, windows, signs, and other elements
- **August 5, 12 and 19** – building mass, height and stepbacks
- **August 26** – Planning Commission report approval

A second public hearing is scheduled for **August 5, 2015**, with additional review of the proposed amendments at subsequent meetings through August. Please contact Kimberly Dietz, 425-556-2415, [kdietz@redmond.gov](mailto:kdietz@redmond.gov), Sarah Stiteler, 425-556-2469, [ssiteler@redmond.gov](mailto:ssiteler@redmond.gov), and Patrick McGrath, [pbgmcgrath@redmond.gov](mailto:pbgmcgrath@redmond.gov), 425-556-2870, with questions and for additional information.

**ENCLOSURES**

- A. Historic Core Map